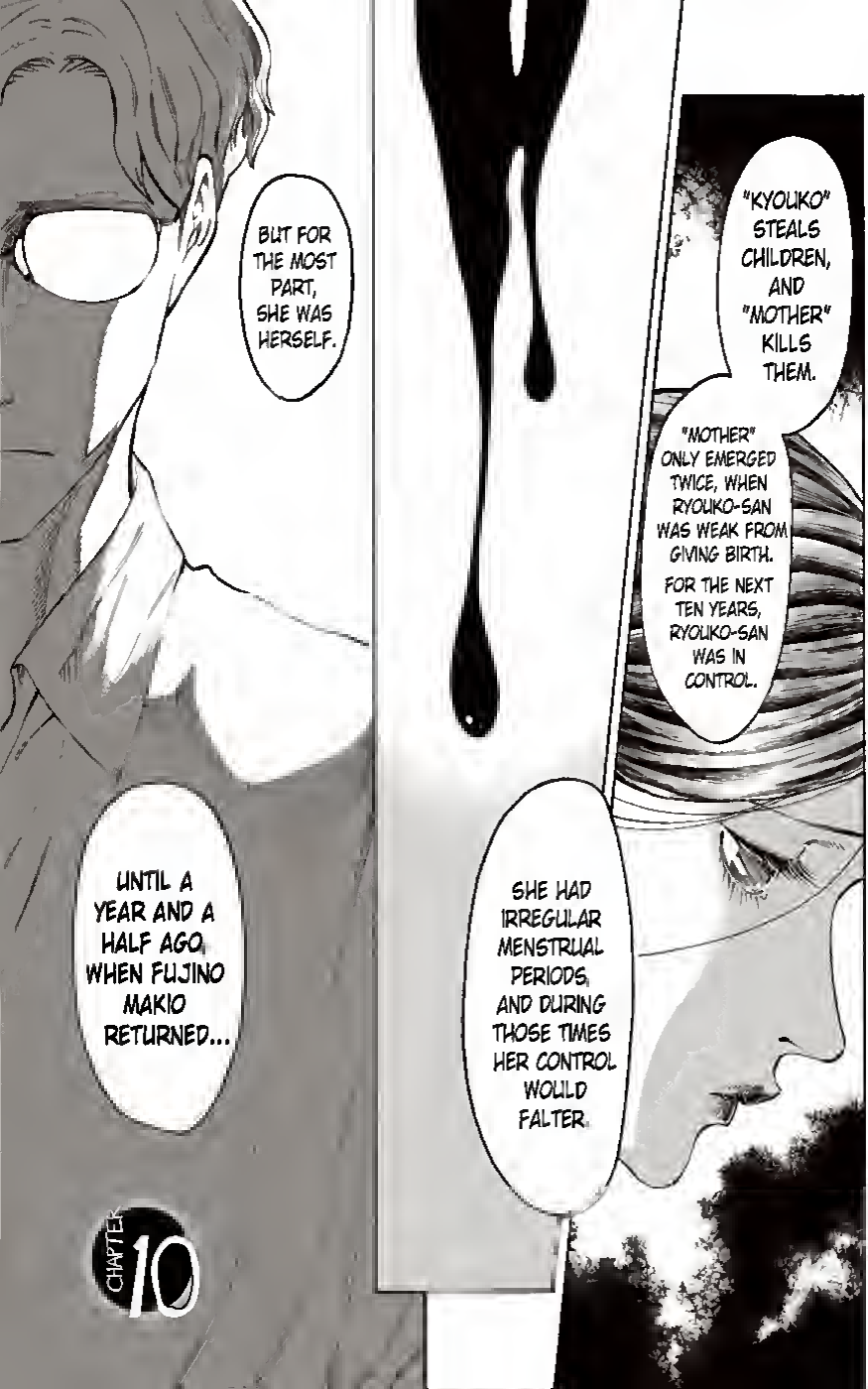
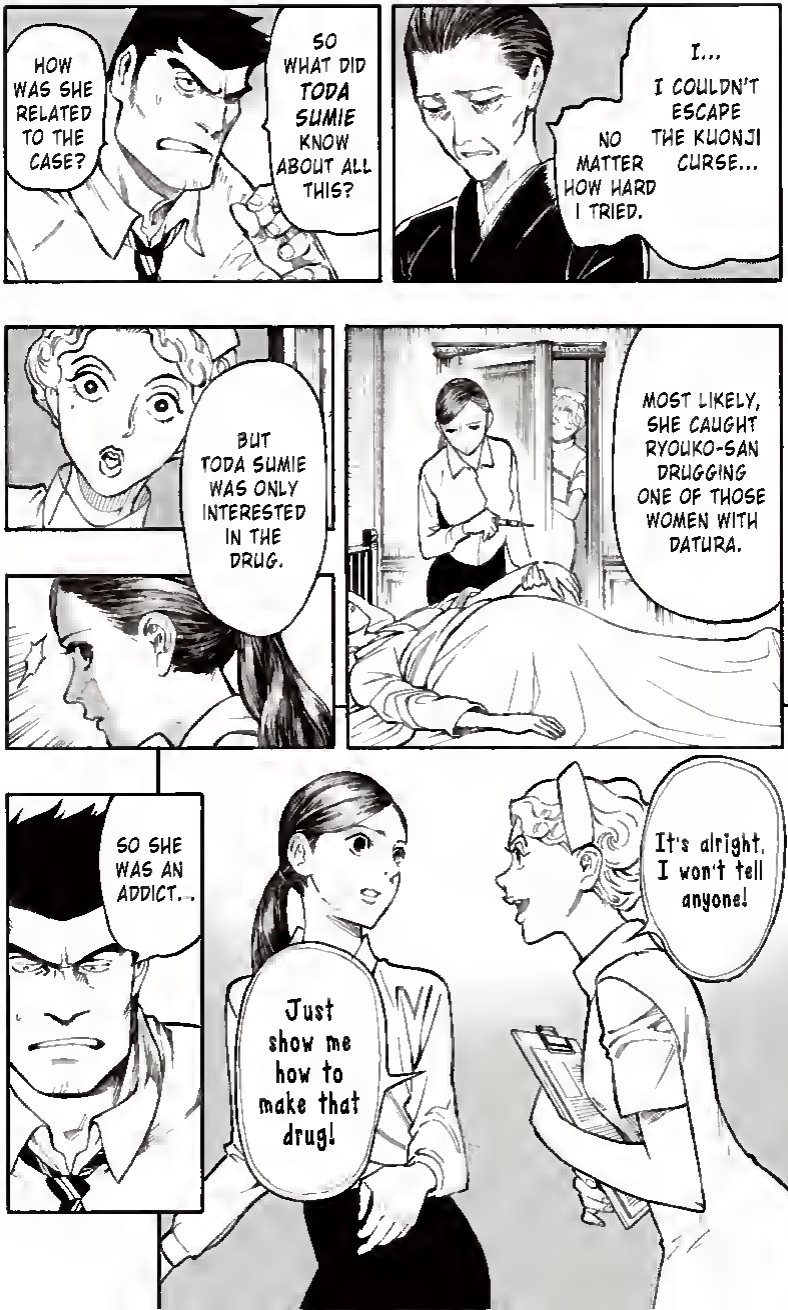
DRILLE
DRILLE

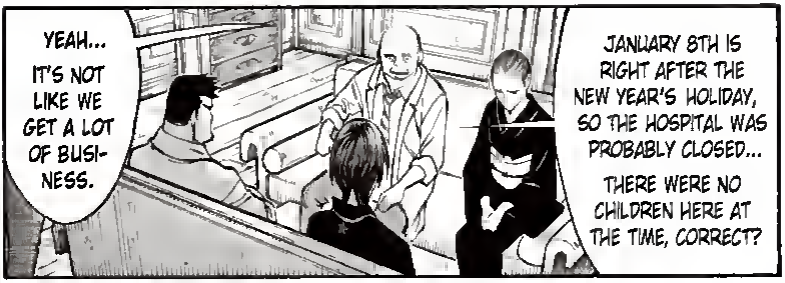

"KYOUKO" STEALS CHILDREN, AND "MOTHER" KILLS THEM.
"MOTHER" ONLY EMERGED TWICE, WHEN RYOUKO-SAN WAS WEAK FROM GIVING BIRTH.
FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS, RYOUKO-SAN WAS IN CONTROL.
SHE HAD IRREGULAR MENSTRUAL PERIODS, AND DURING THOSE TIMES HER CONTROL WOULD FALTER.
BUT FOR THE MOST PART, SHE WAS HERSELF.
UNTIL A YEAR AND A HALF AGO, WHEN FUJINO MAKIO RETURNED...
CHAPTER 10

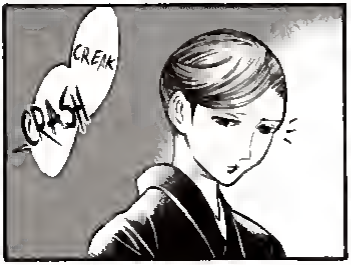
AT THE TIME WHEN "KYOUKO" FELL IN LOVE WITH MAKIO, HER PERSONALITY WAS EQUAL IN STRENGTH TO "RYOUKO."
RYOUKO-SAN HAD NO ACCESS TO "KYOUKO'S" MEMORIES.
BUT HER BODY REMEMBERED.
HER HORMONES SHIFTED, AND SHE BEGAN TO HAVE REGULAR PERIODS.
"KYOUKO," WHO HAD BEEN DORMANT FOR TEN YEARS, WAS REAWAKENING.
しまがない
shimaigenai
translation& typesetting by sana

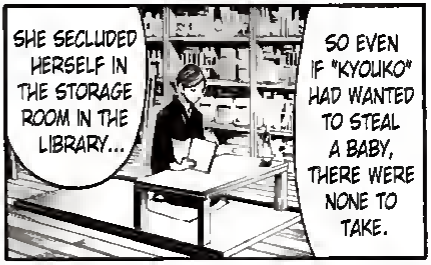
"KYOUKO" AND "MOTHER" ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO KNOW HOW TO PREPARE THE DATURA, AND "MOTHER" IS THE HIGHER LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS.
SO "MOTHER" KILLED THE CHILD AND PRESERVED IT IN FORMALDEHYDE.
SO SHE STOLE A BABY, JUST LIKE SHE'D DONE TEN YEARS BEFORE...
AND SHE KILLED IT.
SO SYOUKO SHIFTED BACK INTO THE MURDEROUS "MOTHER" PERSONALITY AND KILLED THE BABY!?
PROBABLY, YES.
AND THEN, MA'AM, IN ORDER TO SAVE YOUR FAMILY'S REPUTATION...
YOU COVERED UP THE CRIME.
JUST LIKE SHE KNEW YOU WOULD.
THEN SHE GAVE DATURA TO THE MOTHERS OF THE STOLEN CHILDREN, SO THE ENTIRE INCIDENT WOULD BE SHROUDED IN DARKNESS.
THIS IS THE "NATURAL" COURSE OF ACTION FOR A KUONJI WOMAN.

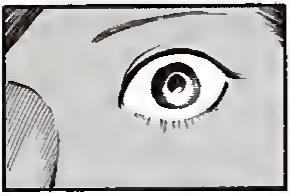

HOW WAS SHE RELATED TO THE CASE?
SO WHAT DID TODA SUMIE KNOW ABOUT ALL THIS?
I...
I COULDN'T ESCAPE THE KUONJI CURSE...
NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRIED.
BUT TODA SUMIE WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN THE DRUG.
MOST LIKELY, SHE CAUGHT RYOUKO-SAN DRUGGING ONE OF THOSE WOMEN WITH DATURA.
SO SHE WAS AN ADDICT..
Just show me how to make that drug!
It's alright. I won't tell anyone!

SO AN OVER-DOSE KILLED HER?
MOST LIKELY.
DATURA - ALSO KNOWN AS KOREAN MORNING GLORY - IS A RELATIVELY COMMON PLANT.
AND IT'S VERY EASY TO GROW.
TODA SUMIE QUICKLY BECAME ADDICTED, SO SHE NEEDED MORE AND MORE.
THE DAY MAKIO DIED...
YES.
"KYOUKO" EMERGED FOR A 4TH TIME IN THE BEGINNING OF 1951...
ON THE MORNING OF JANUARY 8TH, 1951, TO BE EXACT.
THE CHILDREN WERE KIDNAPPED AND MURDERED SHORTLY AFTER MAKIO MARRIED KYOUKO...
SO, BETWEEN THE SUMMER AND WINTER OF 1950.
I guess addiction is a kind of possession too?

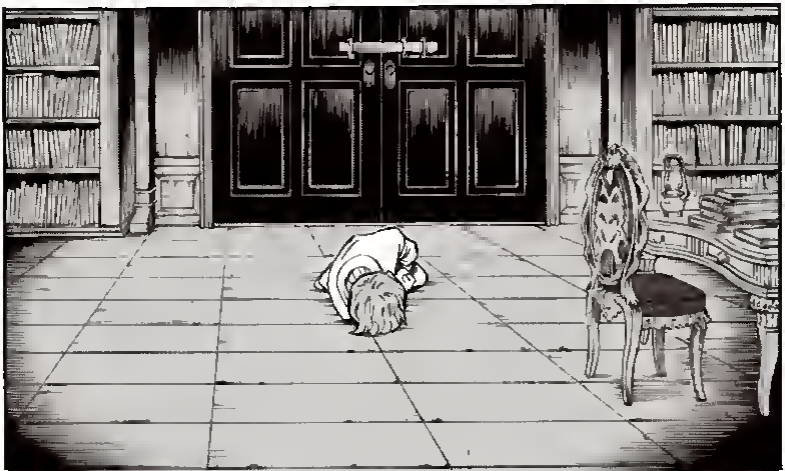

YEAH...
IT'S NOT LIKE WE GET A LOT OF BUSINESS.
JANUARY 8TH IS RIGHT AFTER THE NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY, SO THE HOSPITAL WAS PROBABLY CLOSED...
THERE WERE NO CHILDREN HERE AT THE TIME, CORRECT?

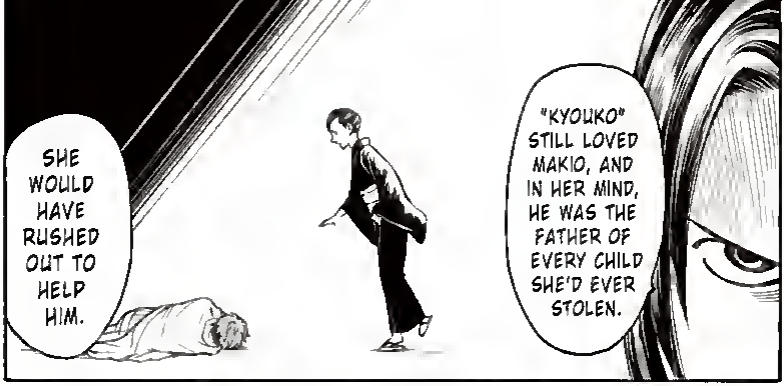

CREAK
CRASH

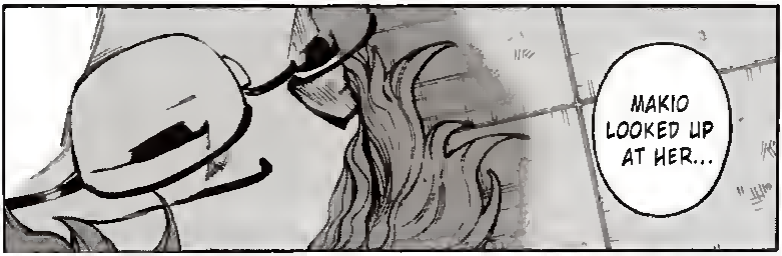

SHE SECLUDED HERSELF IN THE STORAGE ROOM IN THE LIBRARY...
SO EVEN IF "KYOUKO" HAD WANTED TO STEAL A BABY, THERE WERE NONE TO TAKE.

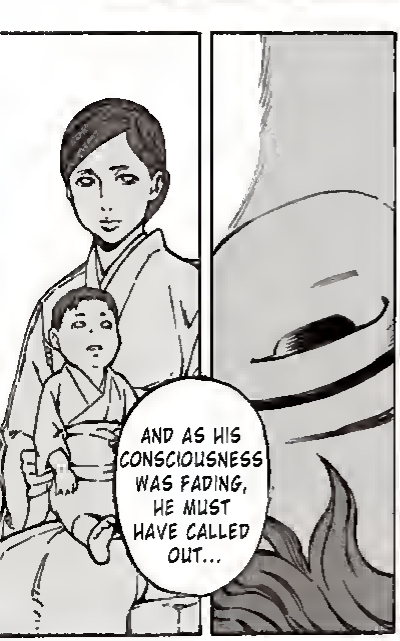


?

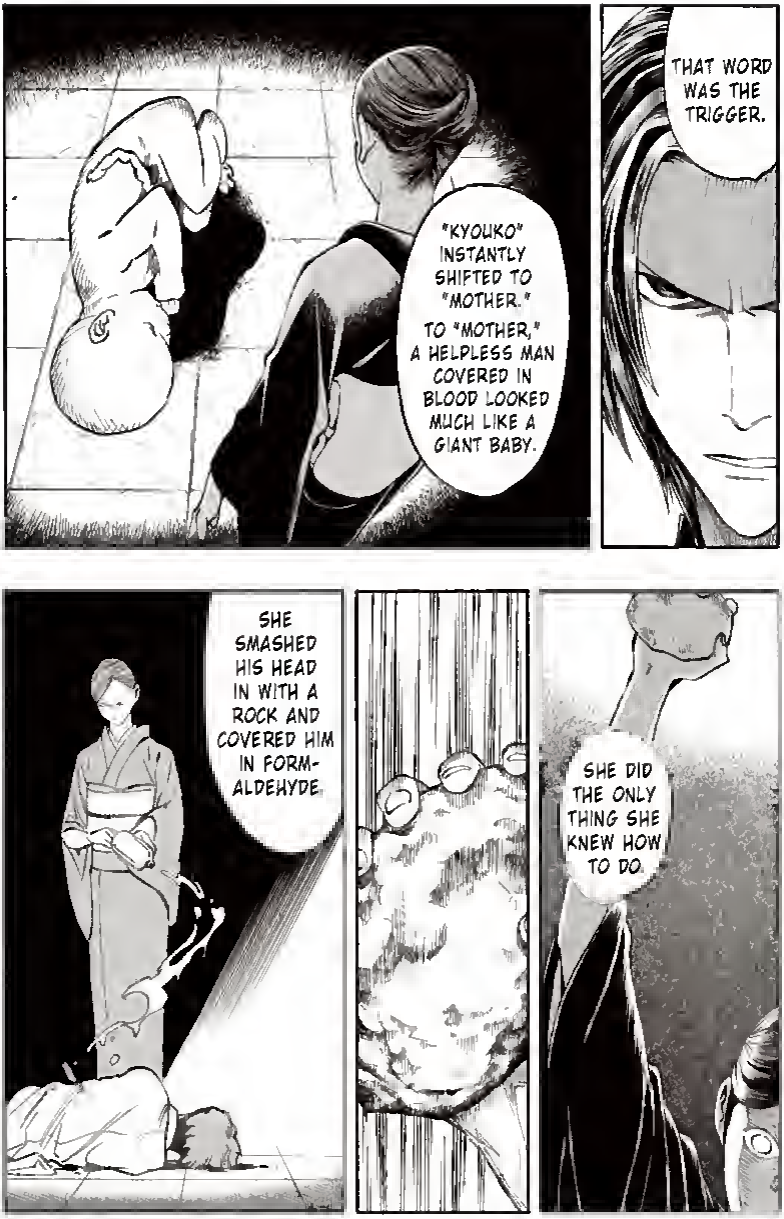


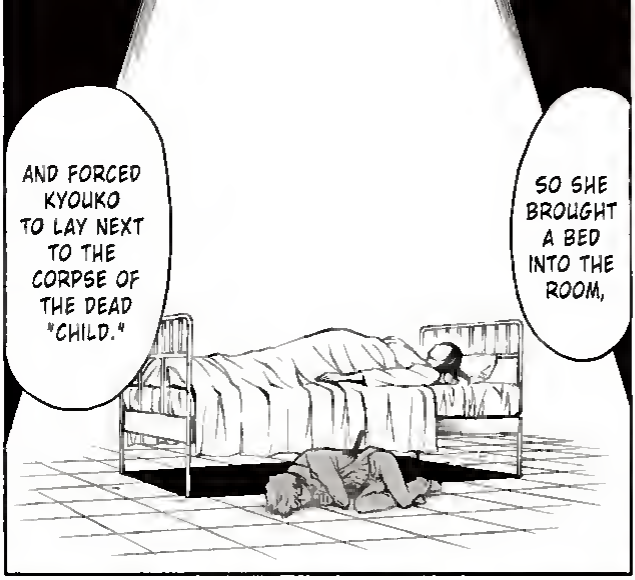

SHE WOULD HAVE RUSHED OUT TO HELP HIM.
"KYOUKO" STILL LOVED MAKIO, AND IN HER MIND, HE WAS THE FATHER OF EVERY CHILD SHE'D EVER STOLEN.


MAKIO LOOKED UP AT HER...

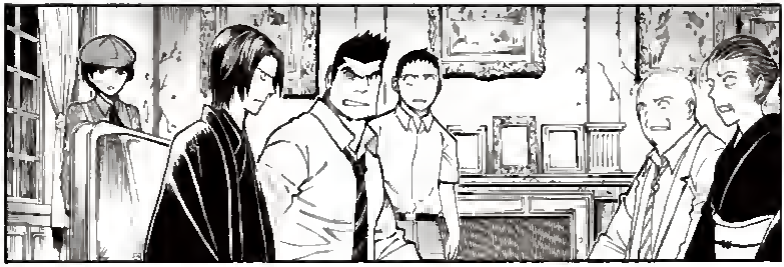

AND AS HIS CONSCIOUSNESS WAS FADING, HE MUST HAVE CALLED OUT...

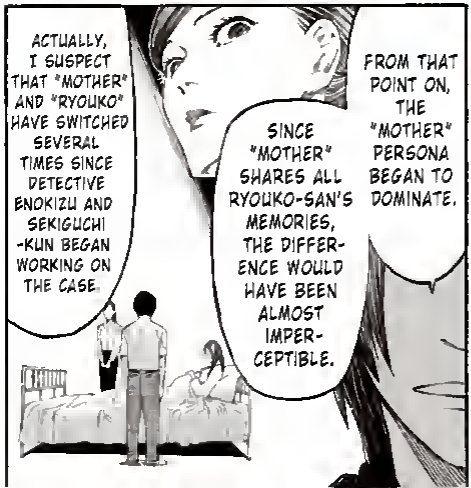
M...
Mother...


"KYOUKO" INSTANTLY SHIFTED TO "MOTHER."
TO "MOTHER," A HELPLESS MAN COVERED IN BLOOD LOOKED MUCH LIKE A GIANT BABY.
THAT WORD WAS THE TRIGGER.
SHE SMASHED HIS HEAD IN WITH A ROCK AND COVERED HIM IN FORM-ALDEHYDE.
SHE DID THE ONLY THING SHE KNEW HOW TO DO.

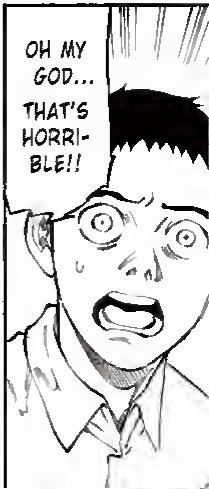

AND FORCED KYOUKO TO LAY NEXT TO THE CORPSE OF THE DEAD "CHILD."
SO SHE BROUGHT A BED INTO THE ROOM,

NEXT, "MOTHER" NEEDED TO PUNISH SOMEONE...
JUST LIKE HER OWN MOTHER HAD PUNISHED HER.




ACTUALLY, I SUSPECT THAT "MOTHER" AND "RYOUKO" HAVE SWITCHED SEVERAL TIMES SINCE DETECTIVE ENOKIZU AND SEKIGUCHI -KUN BEGAN WORKING ON THE CASE.
SINCE "MOTHER" SHARES ALL RYOUKO-SAN'S MEMORIES, THE DIFFERENCE WOULD HAVE BEEN ALMOST IMPERCEPTIBLE.
FROM THAT POINT ON, THE "MOTHER" PERSONA BEGAN TO DOMINATE.

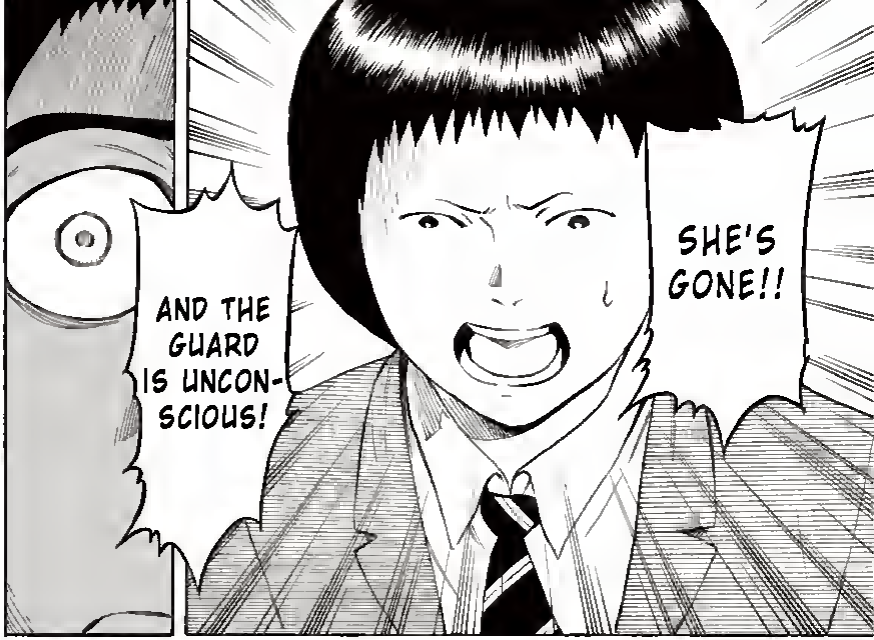
BUT...
BUT THAT'S

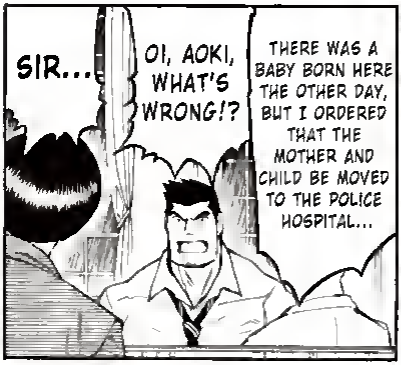

OH MY GOD... THAT'S HORRIBLE!!

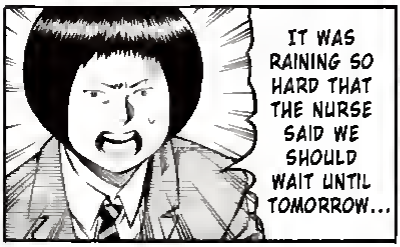
KYOU-GOKUDOU... WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT?
I PUT RYOUKO-SAN INTO A TRANCE, AND SHE SWITCHED TO "KYOUKO."
BUT SINCE "KYOUKO" ONLY KNEW PART OF THE TRUTH, I SUMMONED "MOTHER" INSTEAD.
IT'S NOT YOUR TIME YET.
GO BACK.
COME, MOTHER.
She was smiling...
RYOUKO-SAN HAD NO REASON TO KILL MAKIO, AND SHE CERTAINLY WOULDN'T HAVE JUST LEFT HIS BODY LAYING ON THE GROUND.
AND YET SHE WAS THE ONE WHO KILLED HIM.
IF HER BRAIN ALLOWED ITSELF TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS REALITY, RYOUKO WOULD CEASE TO BE RYOUKO.
COULD RYOUKO-SAN SEE THE CORPSE?
SO THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD SEE THE CORPSE WAS "MOTHER."

I promised that I would save her!
I have to find Ryouko-san...
Please, save me...
.....
WAIT, SEKIGUCHI!!
YES SIR!!
AOKI! FIND HER AND BRING HER HERE!
KUONJI RYOUKO IS A SUSPECT IN THIS CASE!
LEAVE THE QUESTIONING TO THE POLICE!
BUT...

How could Ryouko-san be a murderer?
SLAM
BOSS!!
I don't believe it
AOKI!? DID YOU FIND RYOUKO?

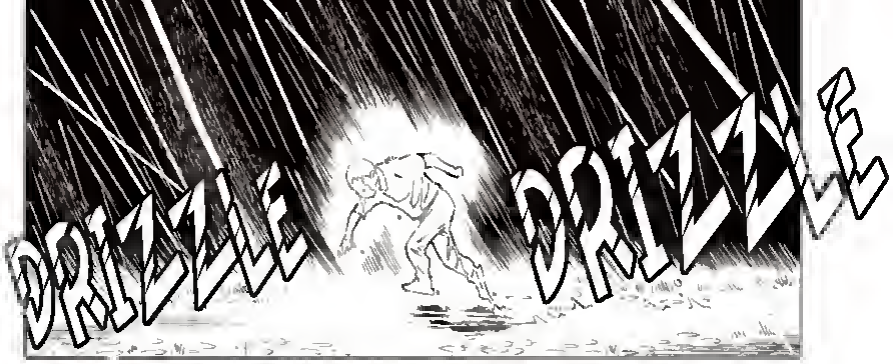

SHE'S GONE!!
AND THE GUARD IS UNCONSCIOUS!

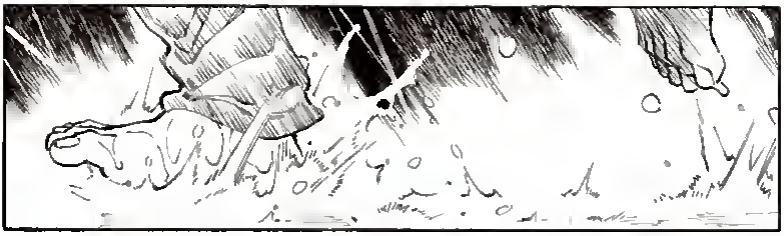

SIR...
OI, AOKI, WHAT'S WRONG!?
THERE WAS A BABY BORN HERE THE OTHER DAY, BUT I ORDERED THAT THE MOTHER AND CHILD BE MOVED TO THE POLICE HOSPITAL...


IT WAS RAINING SO HARD THAT THE NURSE SAID WE SHOULD WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW...

KIBASHUU!! ARE THERE ANY CHILDREN IN THIS BUILDING!?

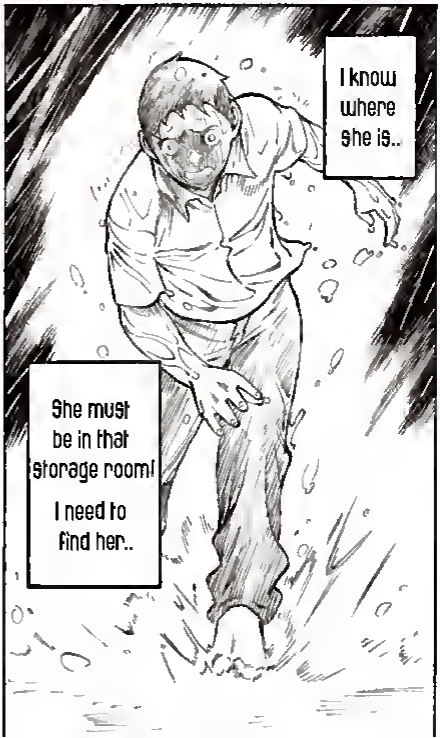
Y-YES SIR!!
DAMN IT!! GO CHECK ON THEM!
DON'T LET HER ESCAPE!!
WHAT ARE YOU IDIOTS LOOKING AT!? LOCK DOWN THE BUILDING!!
WE'RE IN DEEP SHIT IF ANYTHING HAPPENS!!
I need to find her...


DRIZZLE
DRIZZLE

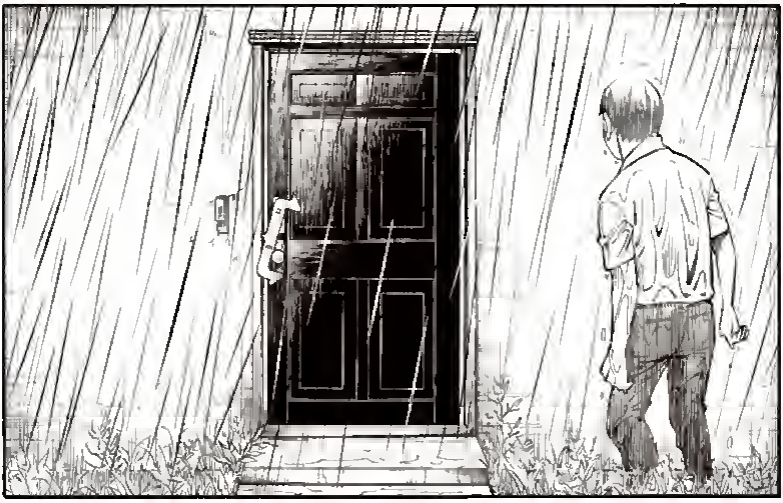


But what will I do if I find her?

What will I say?

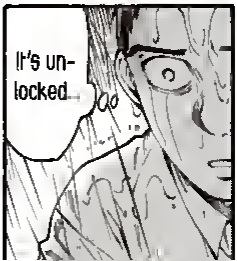

I know where she is..
She must be in that storage room!
I need to find her..

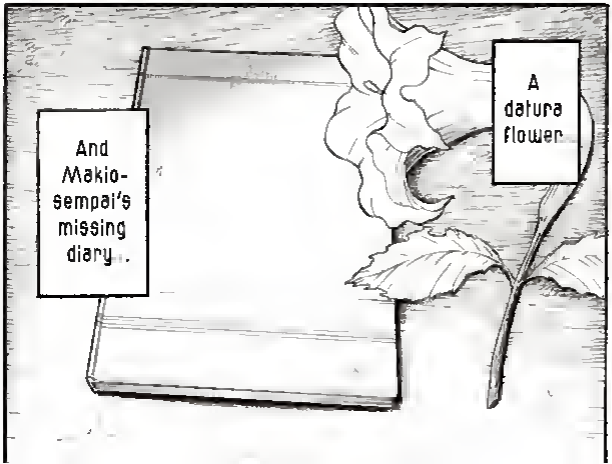
SPLASH

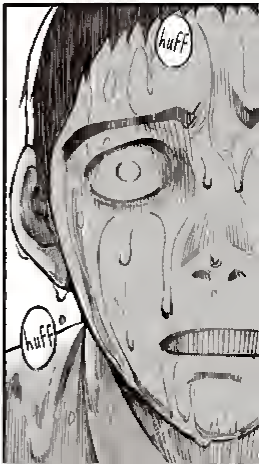


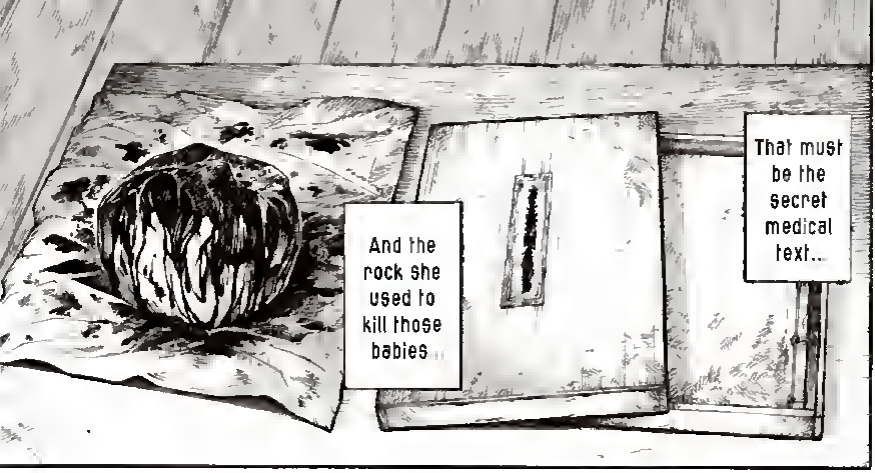
CREAK

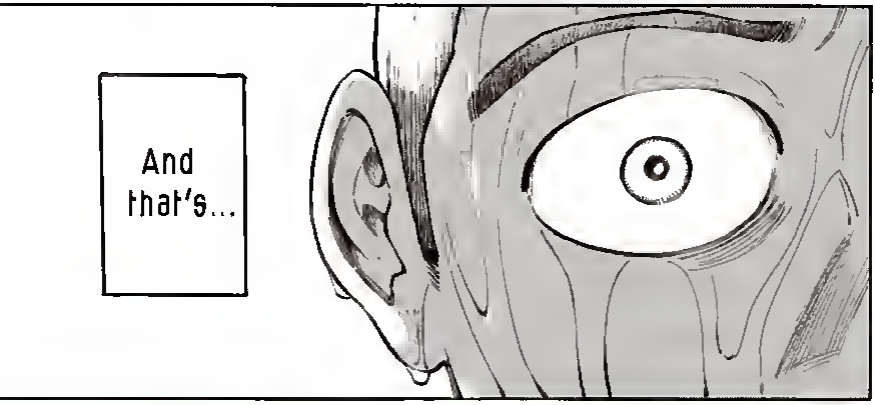
.....
GULP

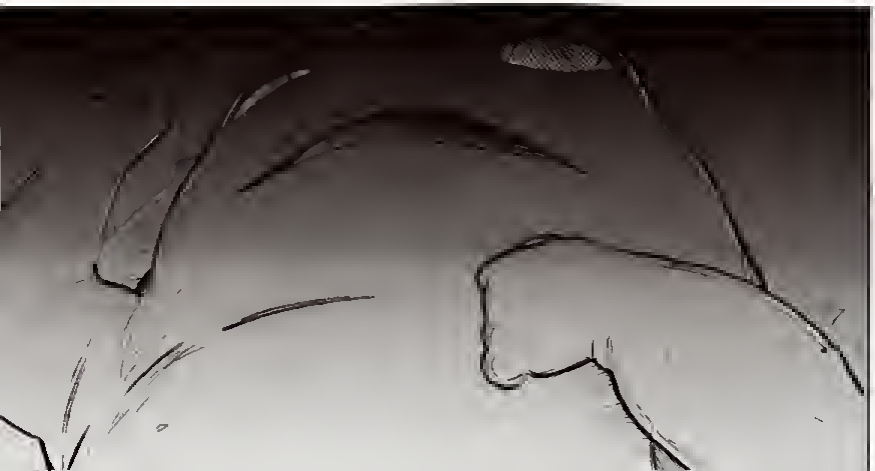

It's un-
locked

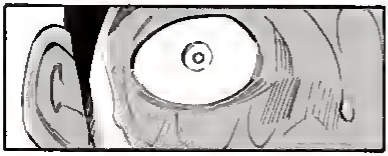

A datura flower
And Makio-sempai's missing diary...

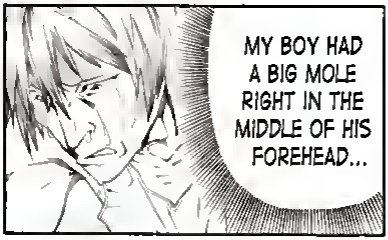

huff
huff


That must be the secret medical text...
And the rock she used to kill those babies...


And that's...






MY BOY HAD A BIG MOLE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS FOREHEAD...

.....

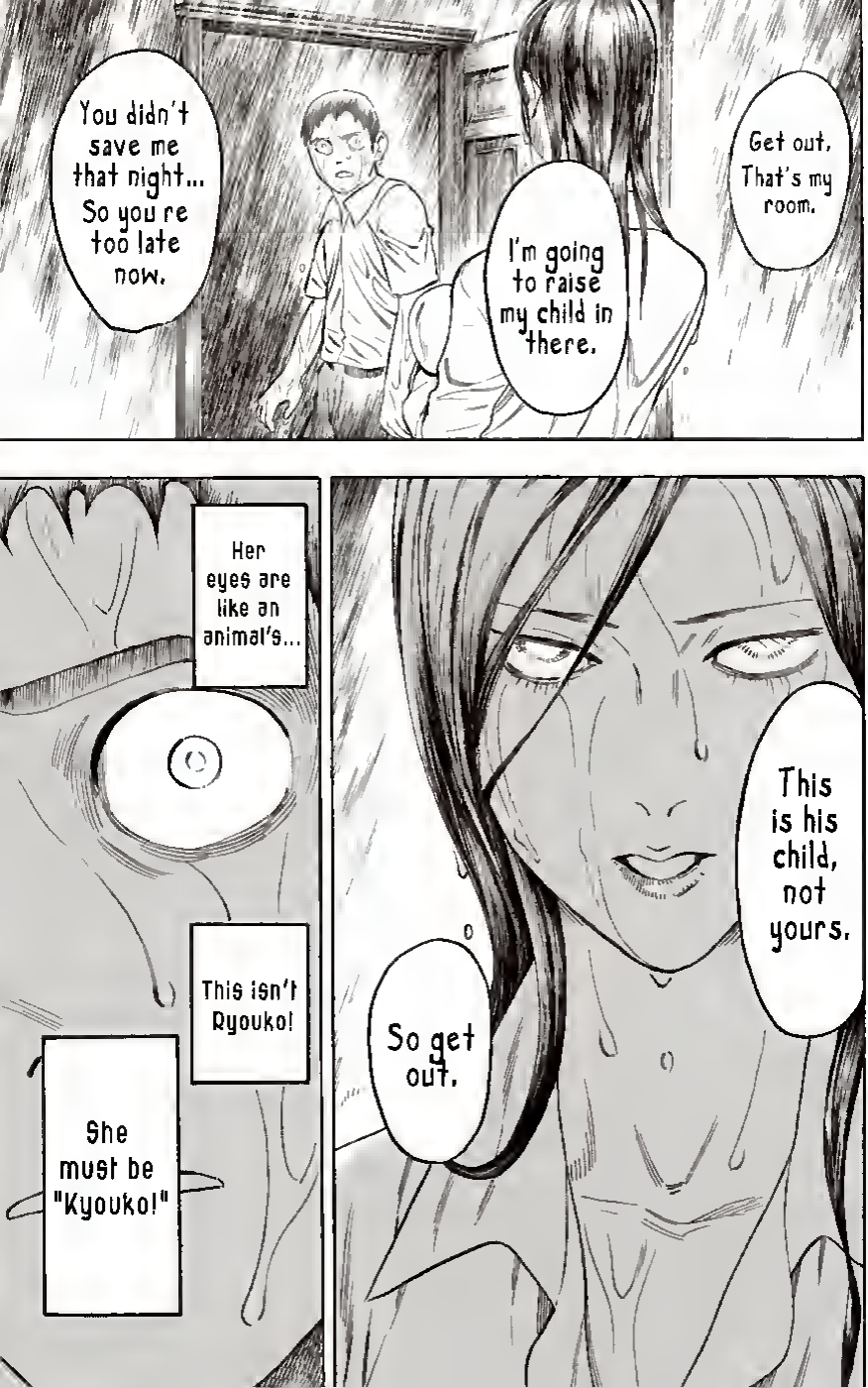
This is the curse.

GAG
RETCH

UGH...

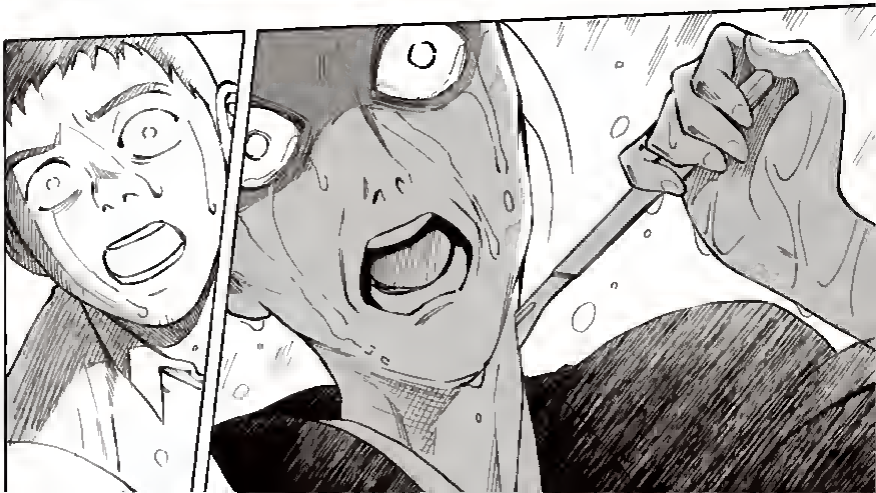
This room is the essence of the curse.
This room...
DRIZZLE
GASP
She's
Behind me...

DRIZZLE
That night...
I thought you would come save me.
I thought you would save me from that terrible man.
What!?
R...
DRIZZLE
DRIZZLE

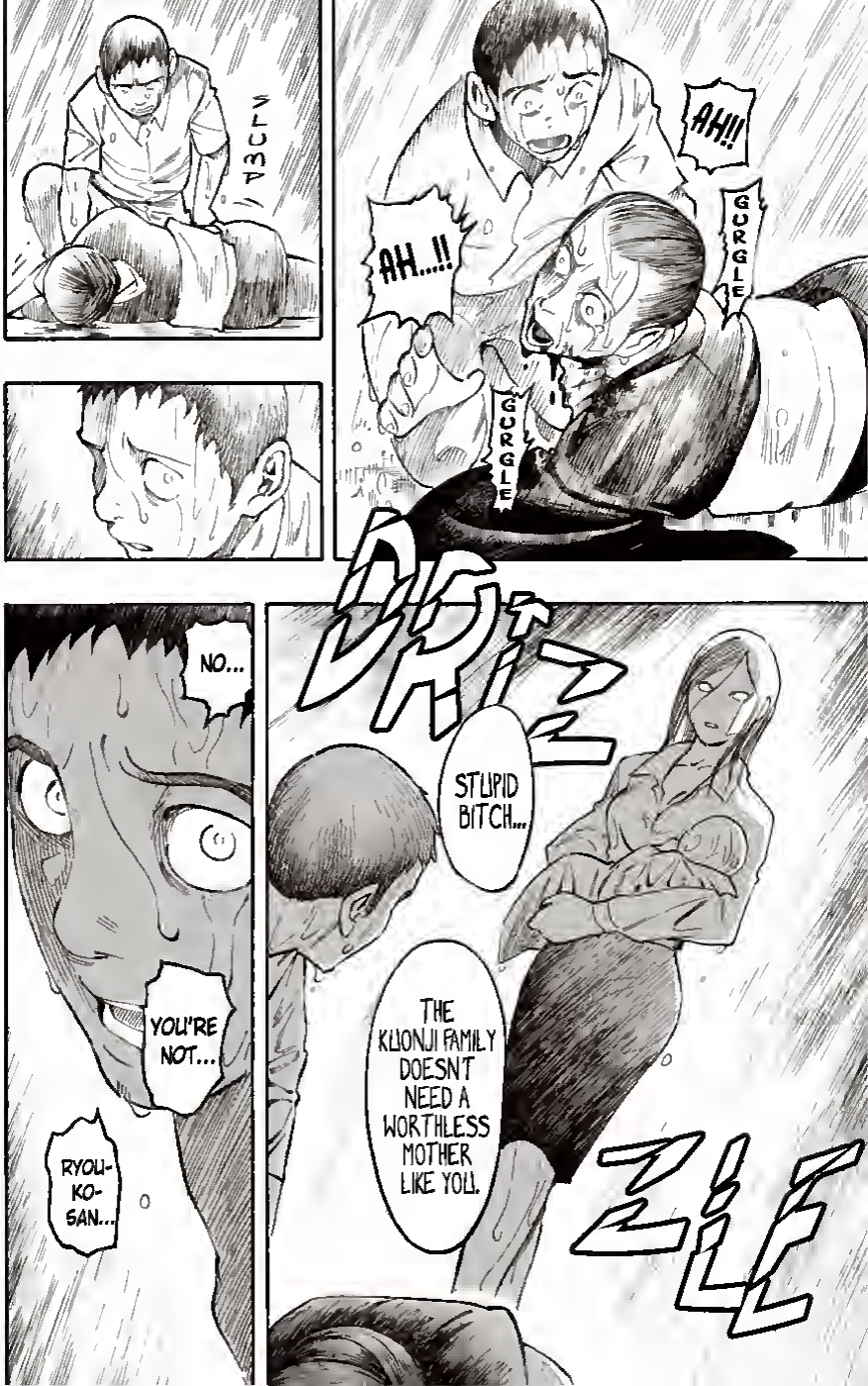

You didn't save me that night... So you're too late now.
I'm going to raise my child in there.
Get out. That's my room.
Her eyes are like an animal's...
This isn't Ryouko!
She must be "Kyouko!"
So get out.
This is his child, not yours.

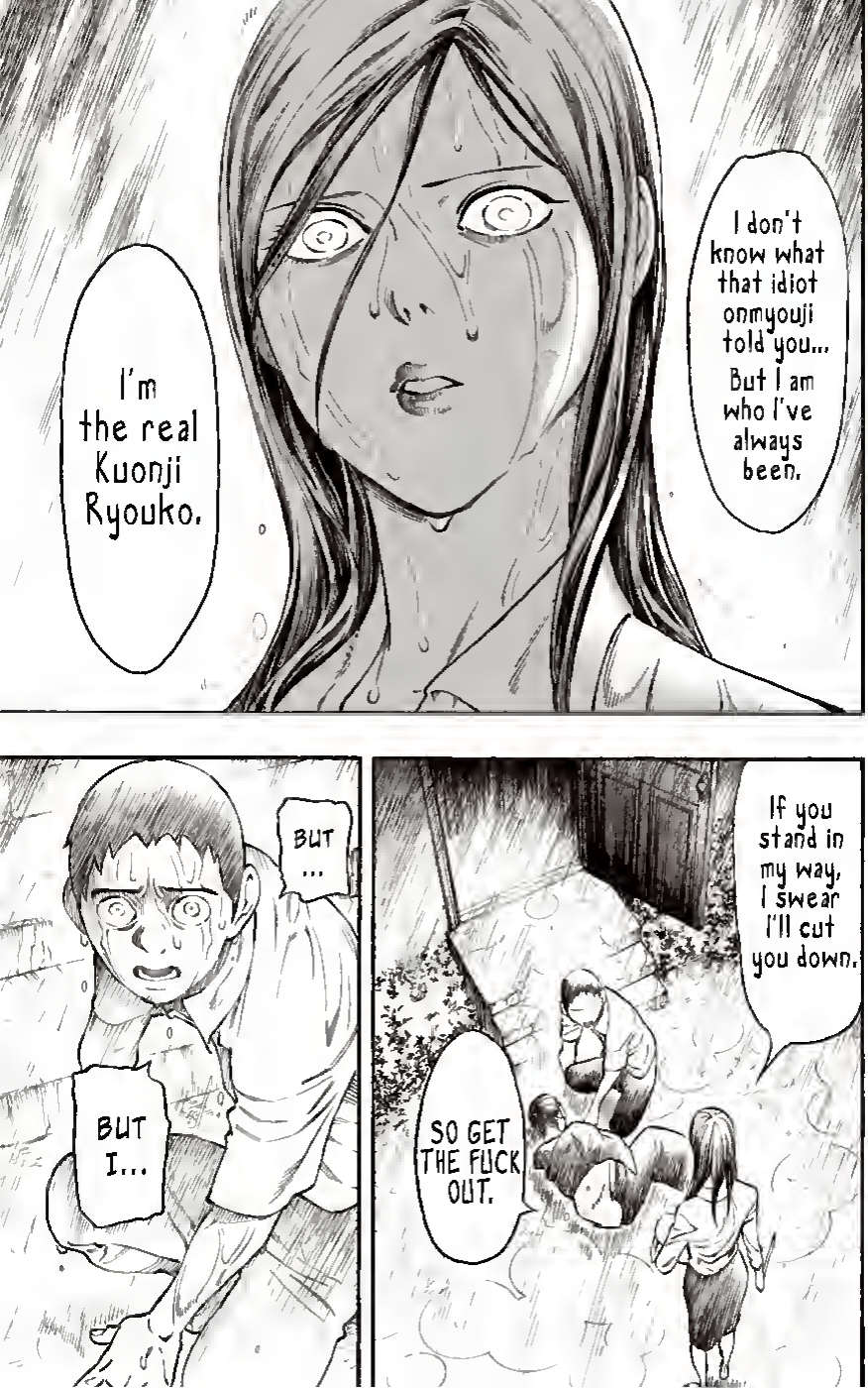
GET OUT!!
RYOU-KO!!
THAT'S NOT YOUR CHILD! YOU HAVE TO GIVE IT BACK!
DON'T TOUCH ME!!
RYOUKO, YOU HAVE TO STOP THIS!!

IT WASN'T ME!!
I DIDN'T KILL THEM!!
SHUT UP!!
GROWL...
YOU LYING BITCH!!
CRACK
DRIZZLE
YOU'VE KILLED ALL OF MY CHILDREN!
I'LL NEVER LET YOU HAVE HIM!!
YOU'RE A DEMON!!
YOU'RE A MURDERER!!



PLEASE...
FORGIVE YOUR MOTHER.
STUMBLE
GRAB
SLA
SH


AH!!!
GURGLE
AH...!!
GURGLE
NO...
STUPID BITCH...
YOU'RE NOT...
THE KUONJI FAMILY DOESN'T NEED A WORTHLESS MOTHER LIKE YOU.
RYOU-KO-SAN...


I don't know what that idiot onmyouji told you... But I am who I've always been.
I'm the real Kuonji Ryouko.
If you stand in my way, I swear I'll cut you down.
SO GET THE FUCK OUT.
BUT ...
BUT I...

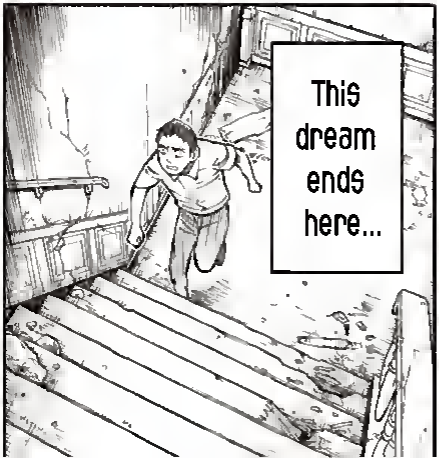
CRASH
DON'T MOVE!!
RYOUKO-SAN, I'M AFRAID THAT YOU CAN'T KILL THAT CHILD.
KYOU-GOKU-DOU?
YOU NEED YOUR STONE TO KILL A CHILD, RIGHT?
THAT'S THE KUONJI TRADI-TION.

I'll make my own traditions.
.....
STOP!!
RYOUKO-SAN!!
No. I must do this...
You don't understand.
RYOUKO-SAN, LET GO OF THE CHILD.

LUNGE
AH!!
SLASH
DON'T SHOOT! YOU'LL HIT THE BABY!

BANG
SLAM
RYOUKO-SAN!!
SEKIGUCHI, WAIT!!
GET HER!!

This has to be a bad dream...
But all dreams come to an end, right?

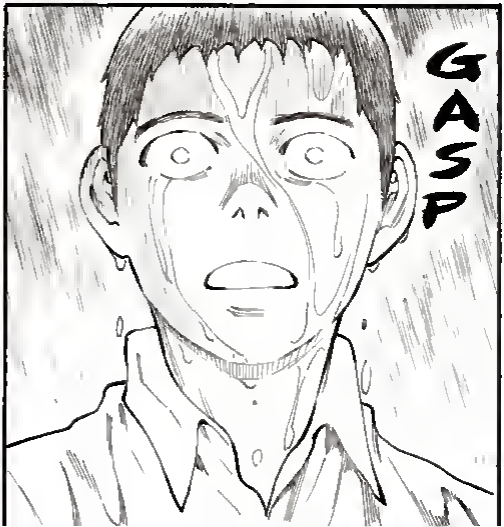

This dream ends here...

RIVALS

huff!
huff!
FREEZE
huff!
ENO-SAN!?
huff!
THERE'S NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN!

That's not Ryouko-san.

That's an ubume.

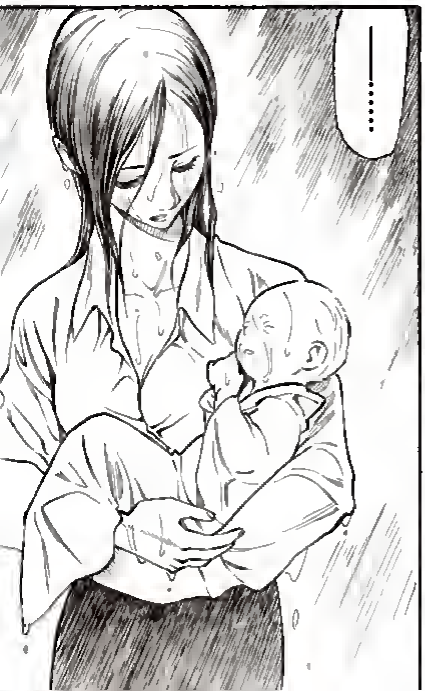


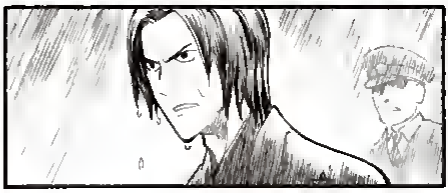
SHOCK
SEKI-GUCHI!!

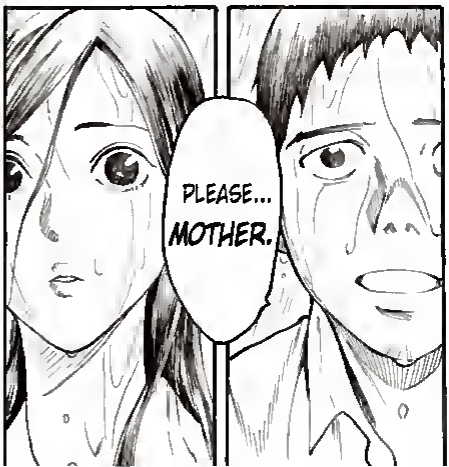
YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE BABY FROM HER!!
IT'S ONLY RYOUKO-SAN!
SHE'S NOT A SPIRIT!
SHE'S REAL!!

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO IT!!

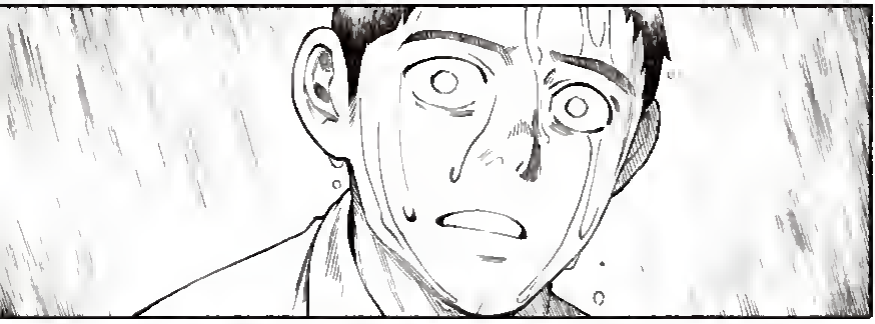
PLEASE...
GIVE ME
THE BABY...

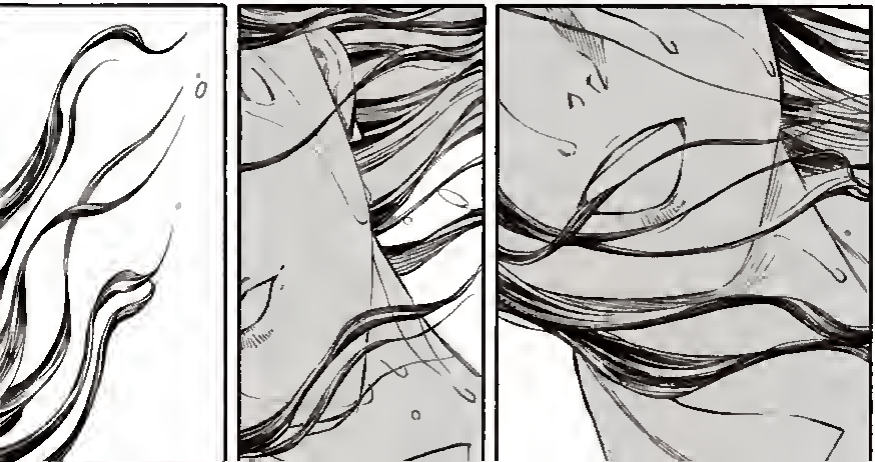

!.....

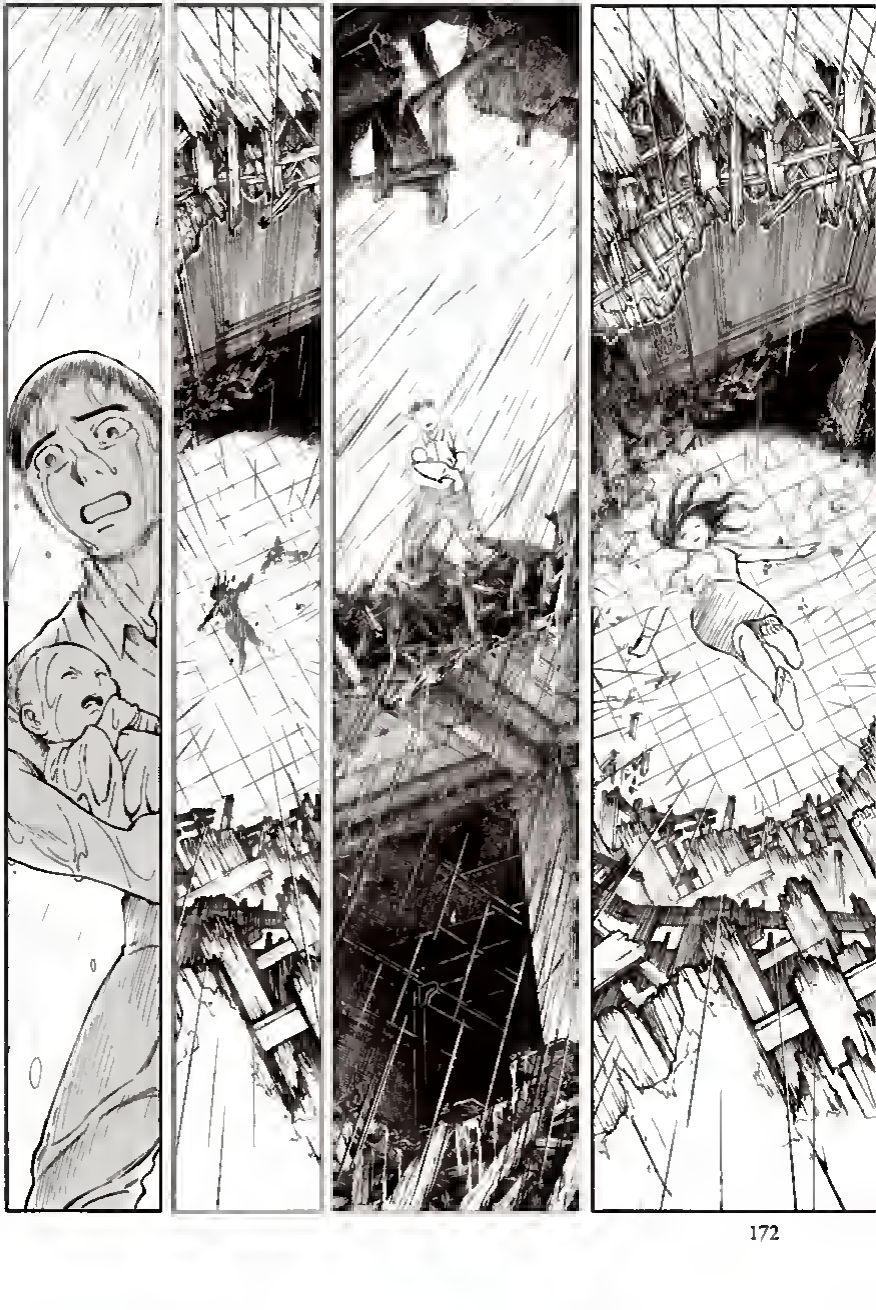


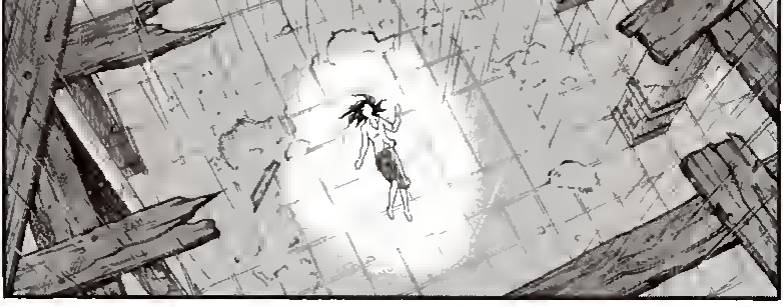

PLEASE...
MOTHER.

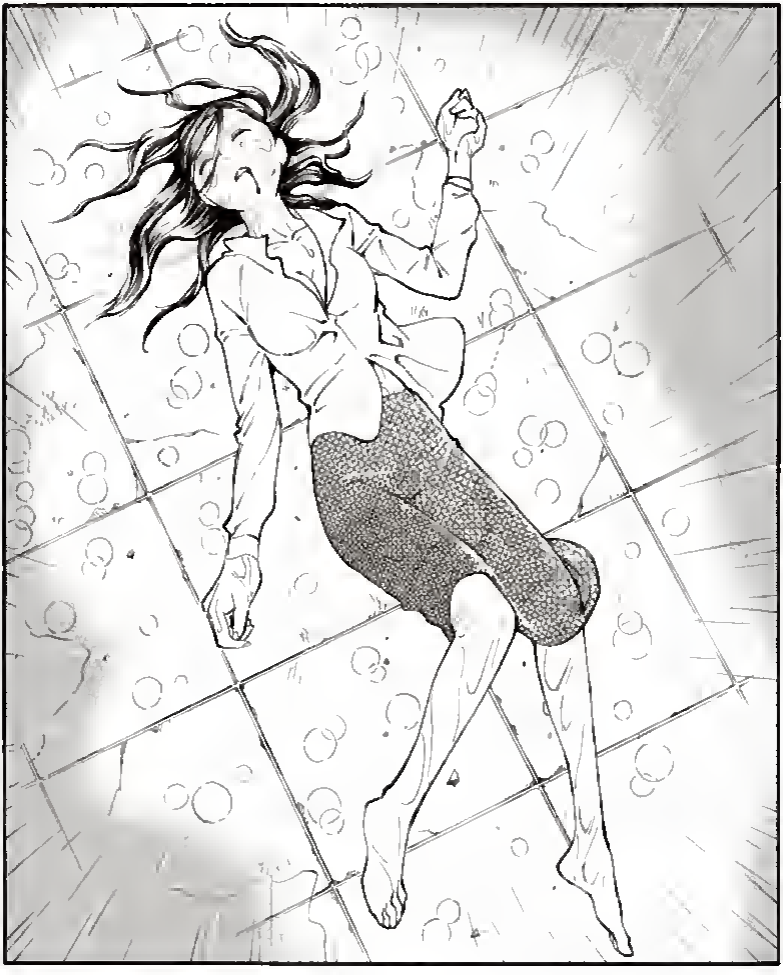
WAH
WAH
WAH
She...
She became
an ubume...

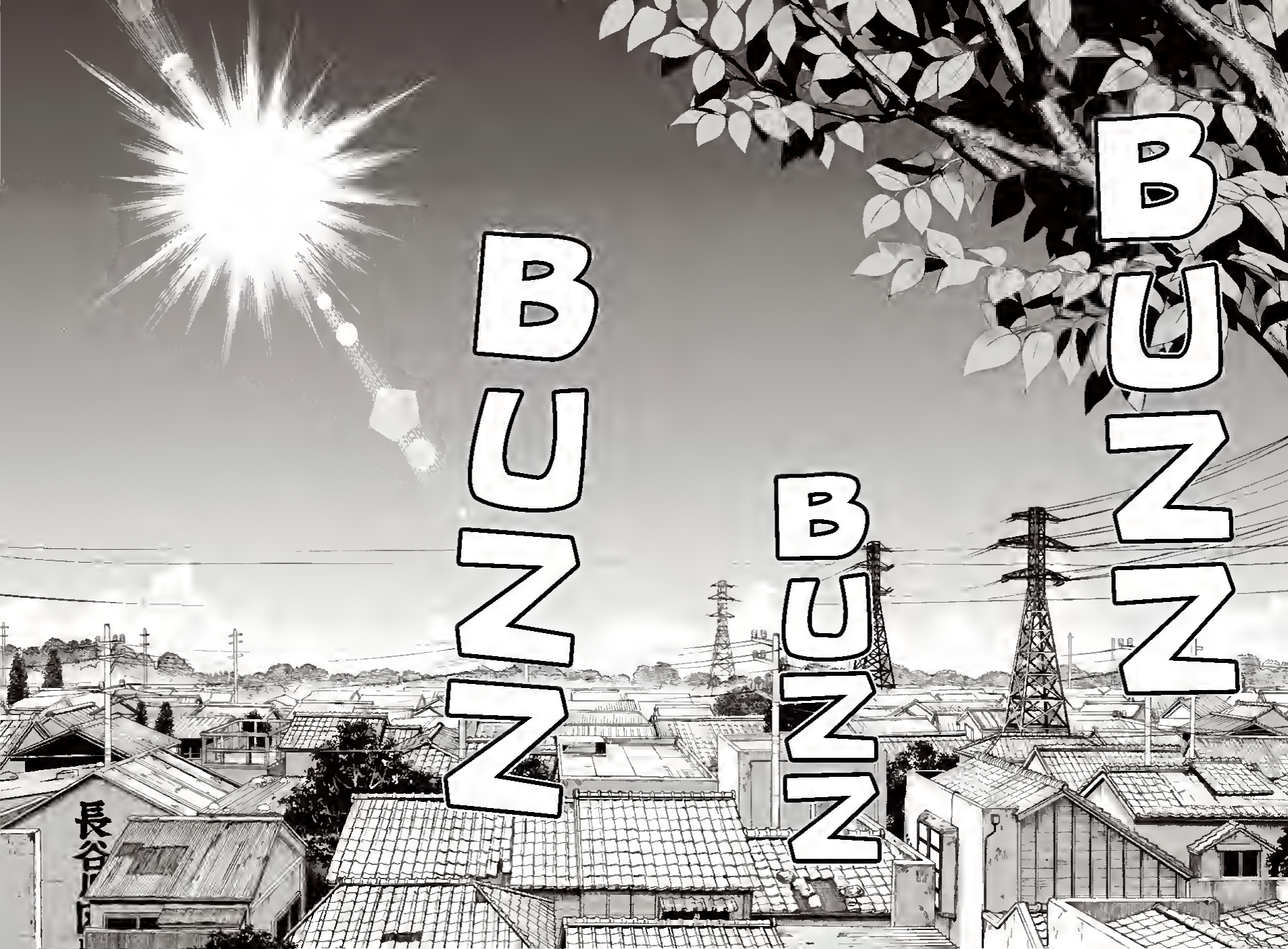


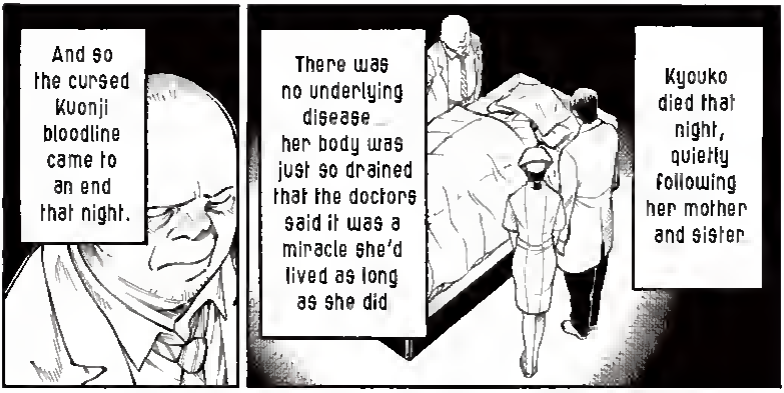






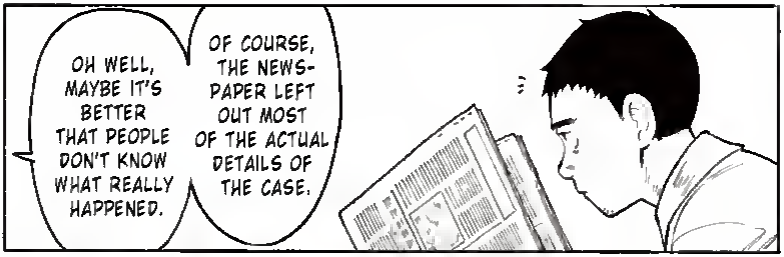


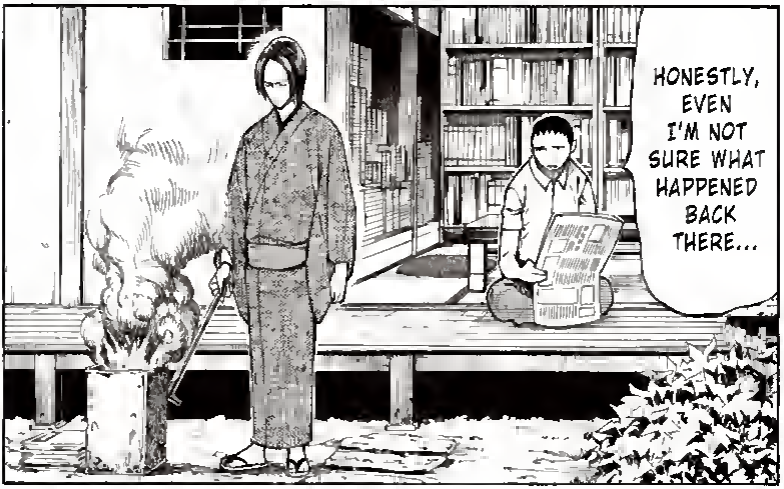

BUZN
BUZN
BUZN

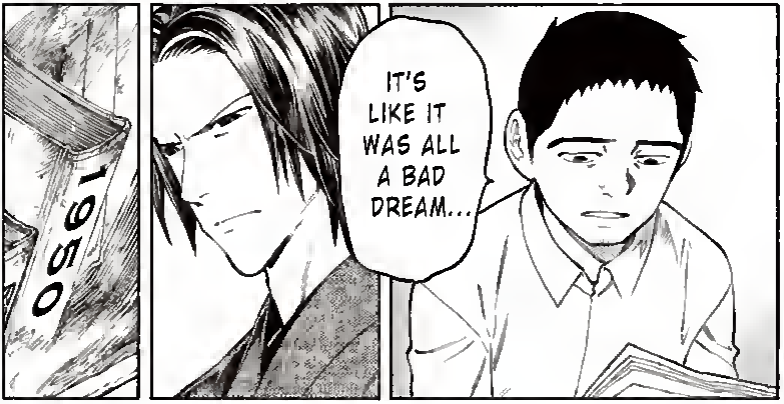

And so the cursed Kuonji bloodline came to an end that night.
There was no underlying disease— her body was just so drained that the doctors said it was a miracle she'd lived as long as she did
Kyouko died that night, quietly following her mother and sister

Kiba-san was able to give Harasawa-san the remains of his dead child.
The last stolen baby survived his terrifying ordeal.

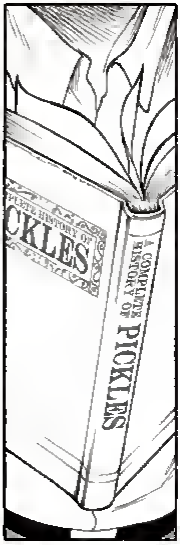
Missing Doctor's Bizarre Death
I guess I can't blame them.
The other two parents didn't even want to see theirs.

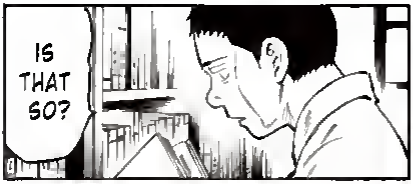

OH WELL, MAYBE IT'S BETTER THAT PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.
OF COURSE, THE NEWSPAPER LEFT OUT MOST OF THE ACTUAL DETAILS OF THE CASE.


HONESTLY, EVEN I'M NOT SURE WHAT HAPPENED BACK THERE...

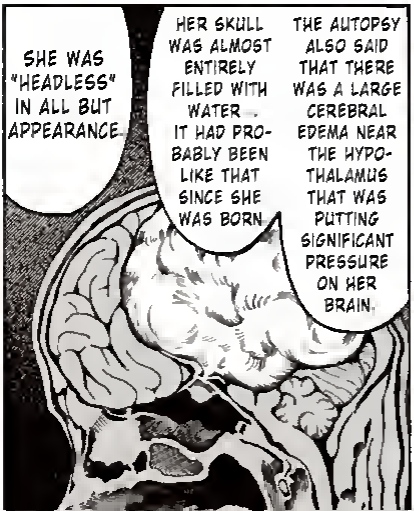

1950
IT'S LIKE IT WAS ALL A BAD DREAM...

KIBASHUU CALLED THE OTHER DAY, YOU KNOW.


PICKLES


IS THAT SO?

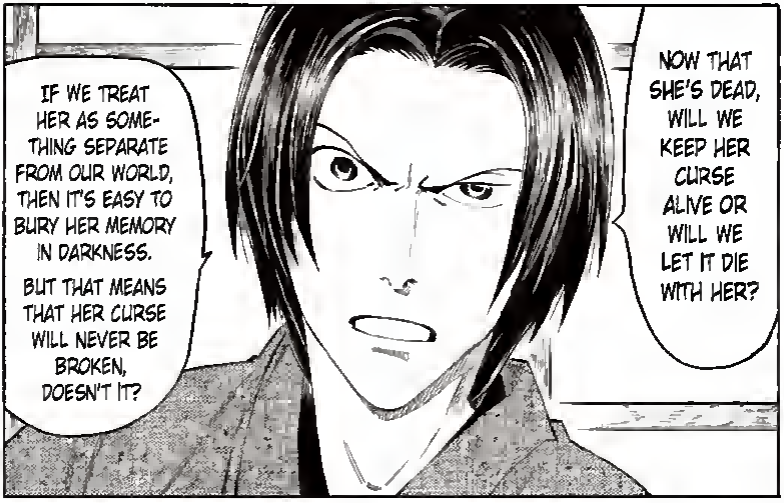
THE RESULTS FROM RYOUKO-SAN'S AUTOPSY CAME BACK... HER HEART WAS VERY WEAK.
FRANKLY, IT WAS A SURPRISE THAT EITHER OF THOSE SISTERS WAS STILL ALIVE.


SHE WAS "HEADLESS" IN ALL BUT APPEARANCE.
HER SKULL WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY FILLED WITH WATER... IT HAD PROBABLY BEEN LIKE THAT SINCE SHE WAS BORN.
THE AUTOPSY ALSO SAID THAT THERE WAS A LARGE CEREBRAL EDEMA NEAR THE HYPOTHALAMUS THAT WAS PUTTING SIGNIFICANT PRESSURE ON HER BRAIN.

...PLEASE THAT'S ENOUGH.
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT HER ANY-MORE.
I DON'T EVEN WANT TO THINK ABOUT HER.
BUT SHE WAS ABLE TO LIVE A NORMAL LIFE...
MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR MEDICAL SCIENCE TO RE-THINK WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE BRAIN.
...SO WAS YOUR OBSESSION WITH HER ALL SOME SORT OF ESCAPIST FANTASY?
YEAH, MAYBE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
IT'S ALL OVER NOW.
IT FEELS LIKE IT WAS JUST A DREAM...
BUT IT WASN'T A DREAM.
KUONJI RYOUKO IS DEAD.

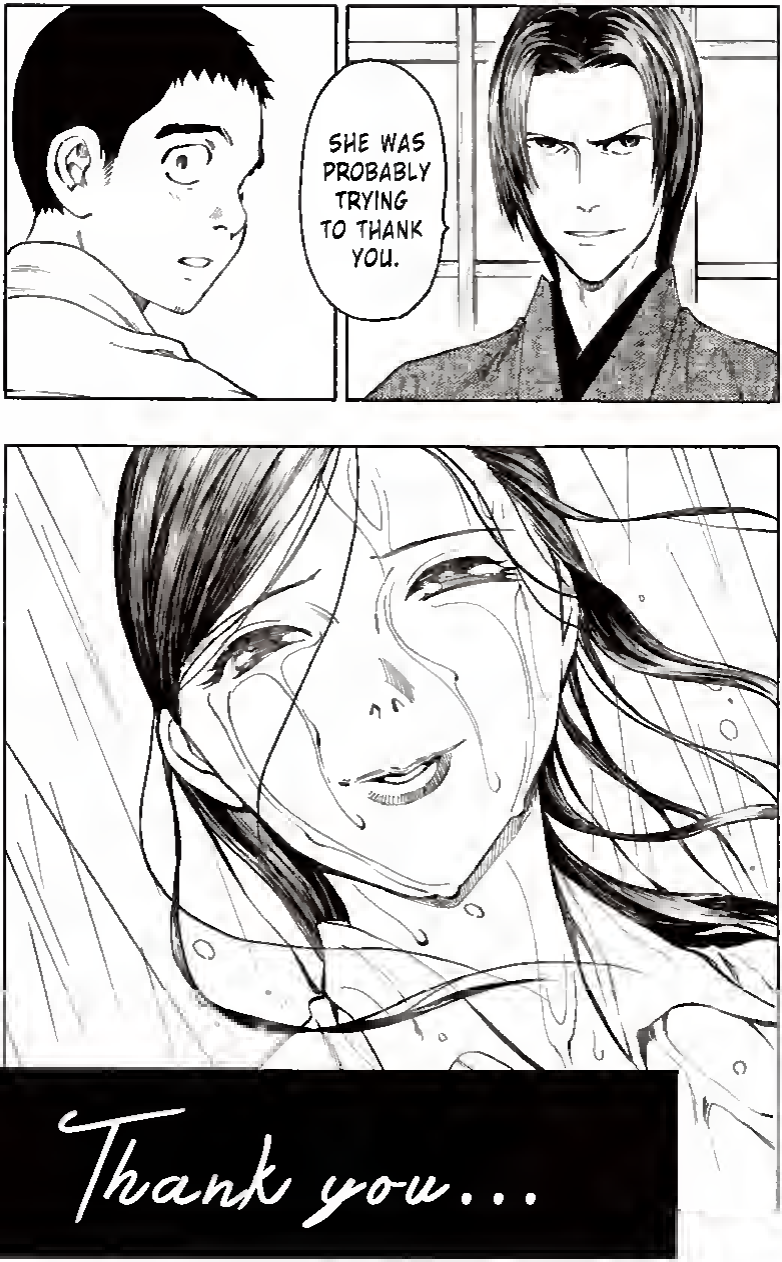
I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING RIGHT NOW.
IF I'M BOTHERING YOU, I'LL LEAVE.
SHE WAS A HUMAN BEING, NOT A YOUKAI OR A SPIRIT OR A DREAM.
HER CAUSE OF DEATH WAS SPINAL FRACTURE, ALONG WITH RUPTURE OF INTERNAL ORGANS AND CRANIAL FRACTURE.
I SAID I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS!
...NO, IT'S FINE, YOU CAN STAY.
IT'S JUST ODD THAT YOU HAVE NOTHING TO SAY ABOUT HER NOW, WHEN SHE'S ALL YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT FOR THE PAST WEEK.
NOW SHE'S LEFT OUR WORLD, AND THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO SAY ABOUT IT.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. THE BODY IS JUST AN OBJECT... IT'S UP TO US TO DECIDE WHAT HAPPENS TO HER SOUL.
WE DECIDE HOW SHE'LL BE REMEMBERED.
WHAT'S LEFT TO SAY?
SHE WASN'T A PART OF OUR WORLD.

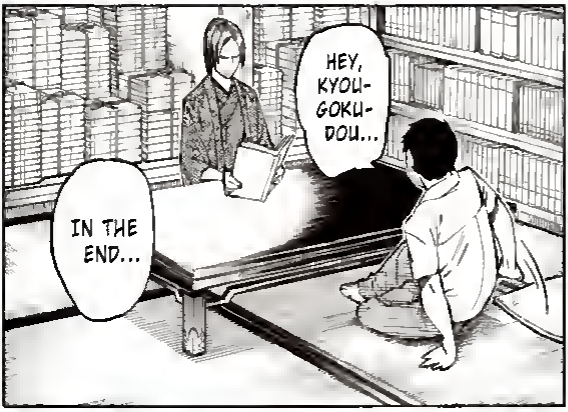
AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR HER NOW!
THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO FOR HER BACK THEN...
WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!?

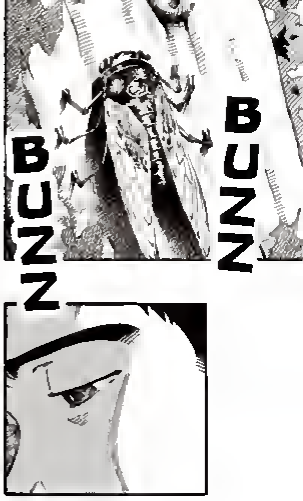

IF WE TREAT HER AS SOMETHING SEPARATE FROM OUR WORLD, THEN IT'S EASY TO BURY HER MEMORY IN DARKNESS.
BUT THAT MEANS THAT HER CURSE WILL NEVER BE BROKEN, DOESN'T IT?
NOW THAT SHE'S DEAD, WILL WE KEEP HER CURSE ALIVE OR WILL WE LET IT DIE WITH HER?

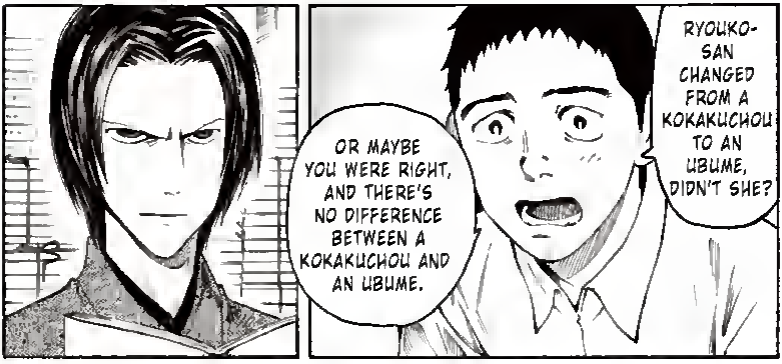
Is he...
Is he trying to comfort me?

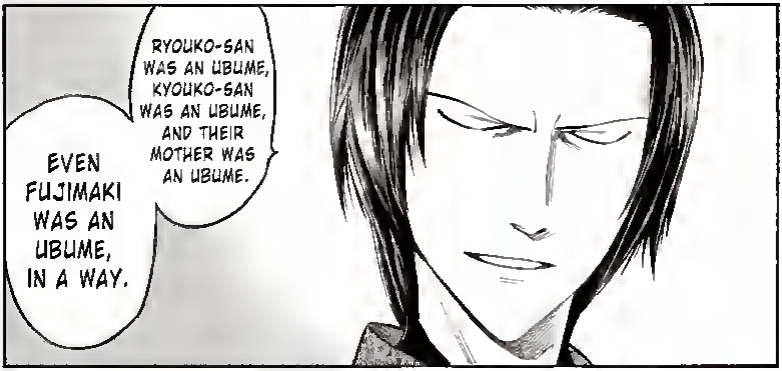
JUST GIVE ME A LITTLE MORE TIME.
PLEASE.
YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT...
I'M SURE IT WAS RYOUKO-SAN.
I couldn't tell...
Was she even "Ryouko" in the end?
Or was that "Kyouko?"
I WONDER WHAT SHE WAS TRYING TO SAY IN THE END...


SHE WAS PROBABLY TRYING TO THANK YOU.
Thank you...



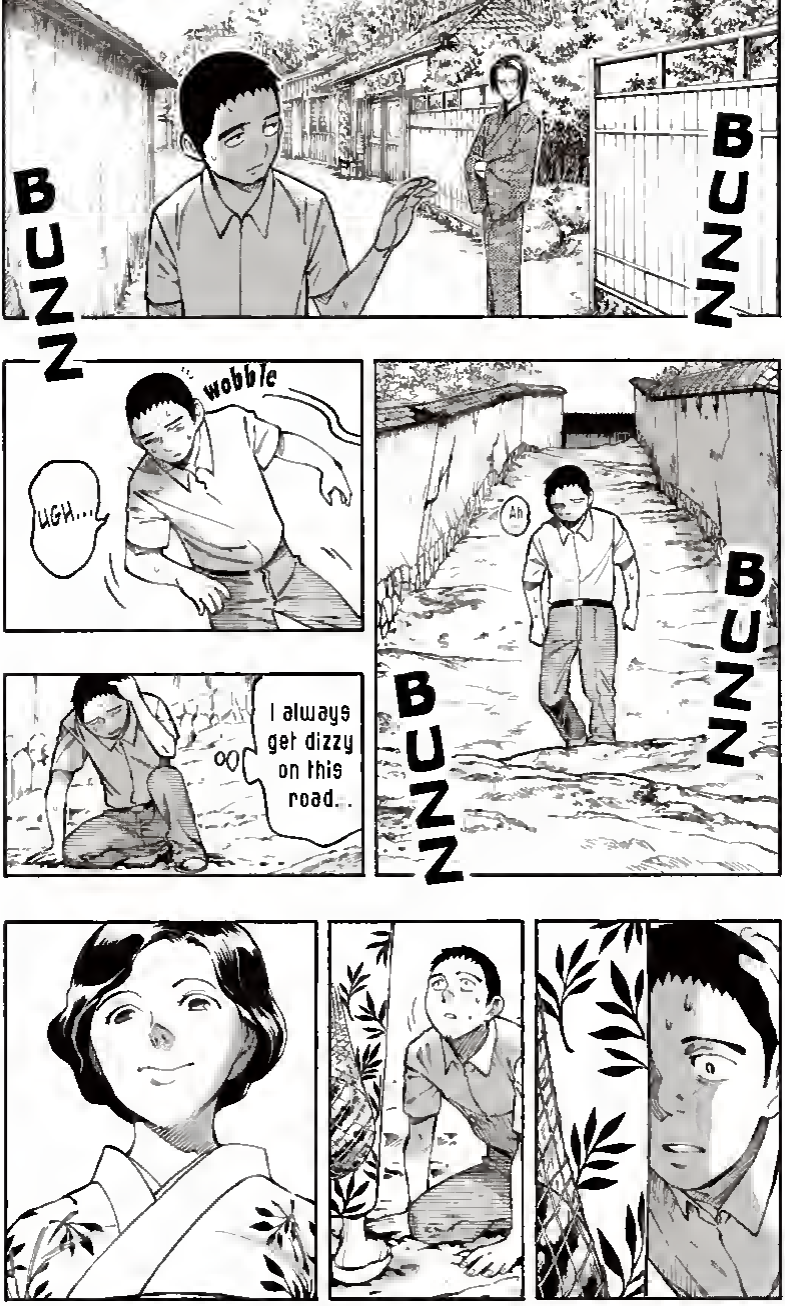



RYOUKO-SAN CHANGED FROM A KOKAKUCHOU TO AN UBUME, DIDN'T SHE?
OR MAYBE YOU WERE RIGHT, AND THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A KOKAKUCHOU AND AN UBUME.



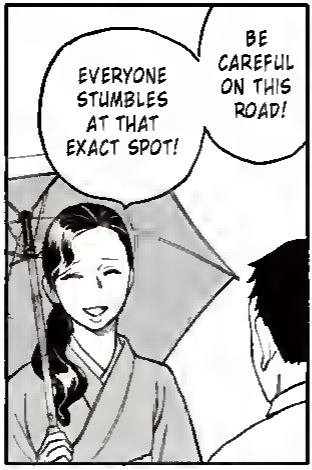
NOTE In case you forgot the conversation from the first chapter, a kokakuchou is a youkai that steals children, and an ubume is a youkai that tries to give its child to someone else. The ubume is either the manifestation of the regrets of a woman who died in childbirth, or a symbol of a human's basic parenting instinct. "Kyouko" was a child-stealer and "Mother" was an animal that killed weak offspring, but Ryouko was human. Makio was obsessed with giving a child to someone else, so in that way he was also an ubume.

SO IT WAS THE SUMMER ...
jingle
IT'S REALLY STARTING TO FEEL LIKE SUMMER.
OF COURSE IT IS.
UBUME ALWAYS APPEAR IN THE SUMMER, YOU KNOW?
OF THE UBUME.

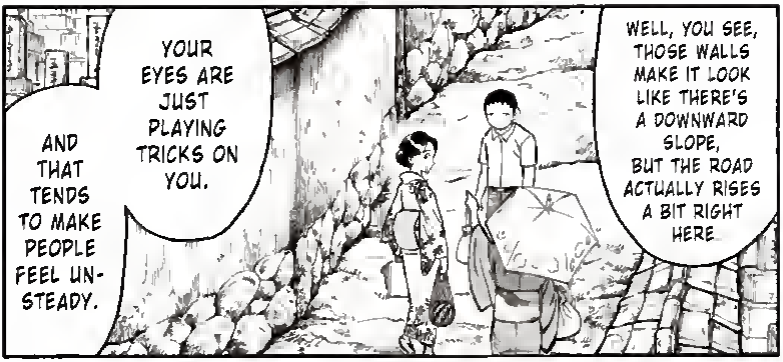

BUZN
BUZN
wobble
UGH...
BUZN
BUZN
Ah
I always get dizzy on this road...

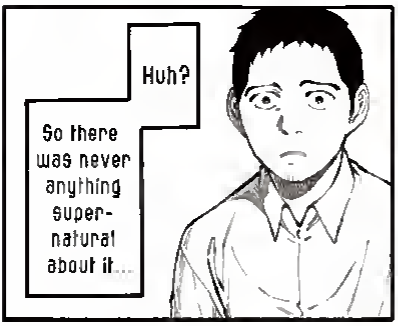
YUKIE?
AND CHIZU-SAN?
ARE YOU TIRED, DEAR?

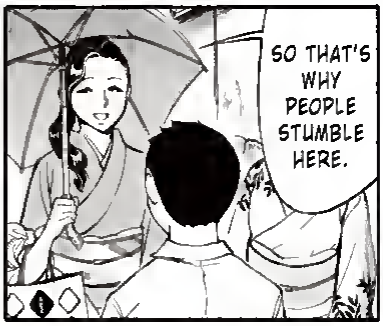
HUH?

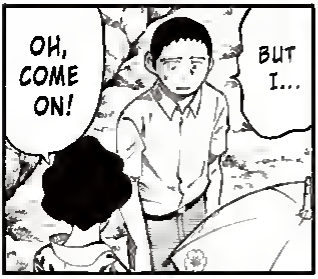

BE CAREFUL ON THIS ROAD!
EVERYONE STUMBLES AT THAT EXACT SPOT!

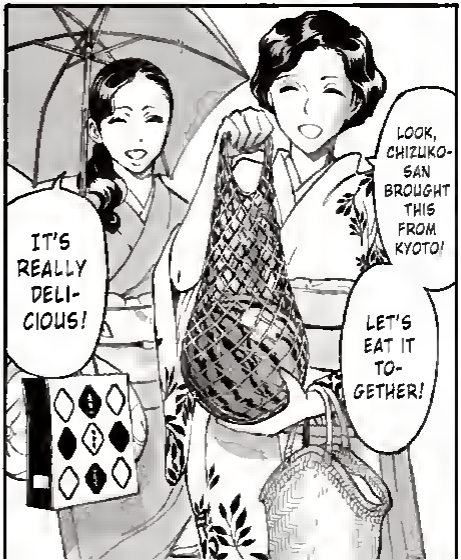
CHIZUKO-SAN WAS ON HER WAY HOME, SO I THOUGHT I'D PAY A VISIT!


YOUR EYES ARE JUST PLAYING TRICKS ON YOU.
AND THAT TENDS TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL UNSTEADY.
WELL, YOU SEE, THOSE WALLS MAKE IT LOOK LIKE THERE'S A DOWNWARD SLOPE, BUT THE ROAD ACTUALLY RISES A BIT RIGHT HERE


Huh?
So there was never anything supernatural about it...


SO THAT'S WHY PEOPLE STUMBLE HERE.


OH, COME ON!
BUT I...


LOOK, CHIZUKO-SAN BROUGHT THIS FROM KYOTO!
LET'S EAT IT TOGETHER!
IT'S REALLY DELICIOUS!

Yukie, Chizu-san, even Kyougokudou...
Everyone is smiling...
If Ryouko-san was here, would she smile too?

[THE END]

The series continues in..

volume two
MOURYOU NO HAKO
the box of demons

volume three
KYOUKOTSU NO YUME
the dream of the kyoukotsu

volume Four
JOROUGUMO NO KOTOWARI
the truth of the jorougumo

side story
HYAKKI TSUREZUREBUKURO
a mixed bag of 100 stories

"Mouryou no Hako" is being released by Dark Tower Scans, and "Kyoukotsu no Yume" and "Hyakki Tsurezurebukuro are being released by shikiganai. There's also an anime version of "Mouryou no Hako."

Thanks for reading!!

SANA
shikiganai